up of new, expansion and de-bottlenecking projects of urea requires prior approval of the Department of Fertilizers which are to be based on Natural Gas (NG) and Liquefied Nature Gas (LNG) as feedstock and fuel, as per the pricing policy for investment made in new, expansion and debottlenecking project of urea notified in January, 2004. Presently, only one proposal for setting up another unit of Namrup Fertilizer Plant (Namrup IV) of M/s. Brahmputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. is under consideration of the Government.

Medicines under ECA

†2607. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether medicines have been included in the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have made any provision in the said Act for keeping control of prices of those medicines being sold in the country which are patented by the multinational companies and are having international prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (d) Medicines are covered by the item 'Drugs' which have been included in the Schedule of the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2006 passed in the Rajya Sabha on 29.8.2006 and Lok Sabha on 28.11.2006.

(c) No, Sir.

Companies violating the order on price reduction of medicines

2608. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have announced the price reduction of more than 800 medicines;

(b) if so, whether Government have made provisions for cross checks of authenticity of these reductions; and

(c) if so, how many companies have been found to be not obeying Government announcement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) Pharma companies have agreed to voluntarily restrict the trade margins for generic medicines to 15% for wholesalers and 35% for retailers. As a rsult of this voluntary cap on trade margins the prices of several medicines manufactured by 11 companies, have been reduced. A compilation of a list of 886 such medicines, whose prices have been voluntarily reduced by these companies, has been brought out. The list of 886 medicines is available on this Department's Website *www.chemicals.gov.in*. It has also been placed in the library of the Parliament. The reduction in prices of these medicines is voluntary and not due to any direction/order from the Government which needs to be obeyed by the companies. Cross checking of authenticity of these reductions is done through reports/price lists/feedback submitted by the Pharma companies.

Generic drugs are generally being sold through a very small number of chemists and mostly through dispensing Doctors and Nursing Homes. Most of the chemists do not keep a stock of these drugs. Some of the stockists in the cities have received fresh stock after 2.10.2006 with the revised prices but these are yet to be launched in the market due to the old stock lying with them.

New bill on medicine prices

†2609. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:
SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to bring a new Bill to regulate prices, production, distribution and supply of medicines; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) It has been proposed

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.